



- We thrive in life when our **love** is defined by God.

This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. 1 John 4:10 (NLT)

We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. 1 John 4:12 (NIV)

We will struggle in life when God is not **defining** our love.

Quick overview:

We can't thrive in life without **intimacy** with Jesus and others.

3 tests that show our fellowship with God:

- **Confession** Test: Do I confess Jesus as my savior and also confess my sins to receive forgiveness?
- **Obedience** test: Do I show my love for God by seeking to obey God's commands?
- **Relational** test: Do I love others like Jesus loves me?

False teachers still practice today:

- If you repeat a **lie** often enough it will be accepted as the **truth**.

- We establish our **own truth** to live by.

...don't always believe everything you hear just because someone says it is a message from God: test it first to see if it really is. For there are many false teachers around, and the way to find out if their message is from the Holy Spirit is to ask: Does it really agree that Jesus Christ, God's Son, actually became man with a human body? If so, then the message is from God. If not, the message is not from God but from one who is against Christ, like the "Antichrist" you have heard about who is going to come, and his attitude of enmity against Christ is already abroad in the world. 1 John 4:1-3 (TLB)

- Examining the truth is our **personal** responsibility.

...don't always believe everything you hear just because someone says it is a message from God: test it first to see if it really is. 1 John 4:1 (TLB)

Now the Berean Jews... received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. Acts 17:11 (NIV)

The standard of truth is **God's word**.

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. John 17:17 (NIV)

For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths. 2 Timothy 4:3-4 (NLT)

This is how we know if they have the Spirit of God: If a person claiming to be a prophet acknowledges that Jesus Christ came in a real body, that person has the Spirit of God. But if someone claims to be a prophet and does not acknowledge the truth about Jesus, that person is not from God. 1 John 4:2-3 (NLT)

...the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. John 14:26 (NIV)

Recognizing a teacher from God:

- They have the **Holy Spirit** in them.
- Accepts the **deity** of Jesus.
- Declares the **truth** of Jesus.

4 questions identifying false teaching:

- Do their teachings make you feel better about your **sin**?

See to it that nobody enslaves you with philosophy and foolish deception, which conform to human traditions and the way the world thinks and acts rather than Christ. Colossians 2:8 (TLB)

Those who have been born into God's family do not make a practice of sinning, because God's life is in them.

... 1 John 3:9 (NIV)

The word of God will always **convict** us of the sin in our lives.

- Do their teachings contradict **God's word**?

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT)

- Do their **teachings** come from a source other than the **Bible**?

I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book... Revelation 22:18 (ESV)

Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it. Deuteronomy 12:32 (ESV)

- Do their teachings discredit (or distort) who **Jesus truly** is?

Anyone who wanders away from this teaching has no relationship with God. But anyone who remains in the teaching of Christ has a relationship with both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to your meeting and does not teach the truth about Christ, don't invite that person into your home or give any kind of encouragement. Anyone who encourages such people becomes a partner in their evil work. 2 John 1:9-11

Application Steps:

- Get a paper Bible.
- Set aside a time to read, study, and meditate on God's Word.
- Have a Bible reading plan.
- Don't just read the Bible. Let the Bible read you.

But you belong to God, my dear children. You have already won a victory over those people, because the Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world. 1 John 4:4 (NLT)



TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

Questions for Connection Groups:

These questions also work well for personal time with God.

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Explain why?
- Why is recognizing false teaching important?
- Do you think people examine what they hear, to see if it's the truth? Why is examining the truth important?
- What are the long term affects and dangers of establishing our own truth?
- Why is accepting the deity of Jesus and declaring the truth of Jesus important?
- Do you know of any false teachers in our world? Why would you consider them to be false?
- How do some teachers try to make us feel better about sin? Can you think of an example? What does it mean to be convicted of sin? How does the Bible do that?
- Have you ever encountered teaching that contradicted the Bible? Explain.
- Mormons use other sources other than the Bible. How does that change the truth of their teaching?
- What is the danger of teaching that discredits who Jesus is? How do Jehovah Witnesses distort who Jesus is?
- What are some reasons why a paper Bible is important to have?
- Do you have a time reserved for studying God's Word? Why is this important to recognizing false teaching?
- What does it mean to let the Bible read you? How do we allow that to happen?

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